



Citizen You: SS.7.CG.2.2
Citizen Obligations & Responsibilities
VIDEO SCRIPT



CITIZEN OBLIGATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. You may have already learned that the United States defines the term citizen in the Fourteenth amendment of the Constitution as someone who is born or naturalized in the United States. You may also know that citizens are guaranteed protection of their natural rights.
2. But remember it's hard to ensure we know and protect our rights without also being aware of our obligations and responsibilities to the common good. Because our rights come with obligations and responsibilities. These are things we should do, or have to do, to ensure that we know our rights, our rights are protected, and our communities are nice places to live.
3. After watching this video, you will be able to:
 - ◆ Distinguish between an obligation or a duty and responsibility as it relates to citizenship.
 - ◆ Recognize the concept of the common good as a reason for fulfilling the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship.
 - ◆ Evaluate the obligations and/or responsibilities of citizens as they relate to active participation in society and government.
 - ◆ Identify the consequences or predict the outcome on society if citizens do not fulfill their obligations and responsibilities.

That's quite a bit, so let's get started.

4. So, what's the difference between an obligation and a responsibility? A responsibility is something a citizen should do for the common good of the people, like volunteering or voting. Obligations are things citizens have to do that are required by law, such as obeying laws and serving on a jury. But they both can benefit the common good. And that word "common good", is pretty important. These are the beliefs and actions that benefit the community, that really make our community a better place to live and ensure that our rights and liberties are protected.
5. So, let's talk about responsibilities first. A responsibility is an action that citizens do for the common good. Some responsibilities of citizens include voting, attending public meetings, volunteering, and petitioning the government.
6. So, we can think of the responsibilities of citizens as sort of the should do's of citizenship. In our government system, it's both the government and the citizens that are responsible for protecting our rights and promoting the common good to benefit the community.

7. Remember that responsibilities are all about the common good and benefiting our community, and not just about ourselves.
8. So, let's talk about how something like voting can help us be involved in our community. So how can voting be a good responsibility for this? Well, remember as citizens, it's important that we actively engage with our community and the common good, and voting allows citizens to actively decide on leaders that reflect their own beliefs and ideals.
9. The other responsibilities about citizenship are also about being active in our communities for the common good. Such as attending civic meetings, petitioning the government, and volunteering to help the community. This benefits everyone when the citizens see a community need and take steps to find a solution. It's all about being responsible citizens in our communities and our country.
10. So why do the responsibilities of citizenship matter to the common good, if there is no law that says we have to do them? Well, imagine your community if no one actually cared! Fulfilling our responsibilities as citizens helps our communities become a better place to live!
11. Let's check in. Try to answer the following question in your own words.
12. Why is fulfilling the responsibilities of citizenship important to the common good, even though it isn't required by law?
→ PAUSE-ANSWER TO QUESTION
13. Before we jump into the next section on obligations, let's talk about what we've learned so far. Remember the common good is the beliefs and actions that benefit the community. An obligation is an action that citizens do that is required by law. Responsibilities are actions citizens do for the common good. Some examples of responsibilities include voting, community service, attending civic meetings, and petitioning the government.
14. The obligations of citizens are things that citizens do to ensure that the United States continues to be a better and safer place. And generally speaking, these are required by law and have some legal consequences for not doing them.
15. Some examples would be paying taxes, registering for Selective Service, and serving on juries.
16. So, let's spend a few minutes and talk about these obligations. Let's begin with taxes, because everybody pays taxes in some form or another. So how can taxes make America a better and safer place? Well, they help the government be able to afford services that benefit the general public, such as Medicare, Social Security, roads, and even your school!
17. So how about the Selective Service? Just what IS the Selective Service? How is this an obligation? Well, let's define it first. Basically, all male citizens and non-citizens, between the ages of 18 and 25 years old are required to register with the Selective Service, which

is part of the U.S. government. So why is this Selective Service obligation important? Well basically, when you are registering for Selective Service, the government knows where it needs to find you just in case, they have to draft you for the military if we're ever attacked. By defending the nation if asked to, citizens are making sure that those that are living in the United States are protected from any potential enemies.

18. So, we've got paying taxes, registering for Selective Service, but what about jury duty? Sometimes we hear people making jokes about jury duty and why they don't want to do it, but why is jury duty such an important obligation for citizens?
19. Remember that the Bill of Rights guarantees the right to a jury trial. And if we don't have people that can serve on a jury, or are willing to serve on a jury, then how can we ensure that the right to a jury trial is protected if we can't have anyone that is actually willing to serve on a jury? This is one of the most important obligations we have as citizens.
20. So, remember that as citizens we all have an obligation to the common good, and fulfilling our obligations as citizens is not only important for following the law, but making sure that our rights and liberties are protected.
21. All right, that's a lot of obligations. So, let's check in. Try to answer the following question in your own words.
22. Why is fulfilling our obligations as citizens important to the common good?
→ PAUSE- ANSWER TO QUESTION
23. Let's recap what we've learned so far. Well, we know the common good is the beliefs or actions that benefit the community. Responsibilities are the actions citizens do for the common good. Some examples of those actions are voting, community service, attending civic meetings, and petitioning the government.
24. An obligation is an action a citizen does that is required by law. Examples of obligations include paying taxes, registering for Selective Service, and serving on juries. Fulfilling responsibilities can make our communities better. And fulfilling obligations is required by law and ensures our rights and liberties are protected.
25. So just remember, as a member and citizen of this country, there are responsibilities and obligations that we all have to do. As a democratic republic, the citizens and residents of this country actively participate in the process for the common good, and just think about what this country would be like if we all decided not to fulfill our obligations and responsibilities?
26. That's all the time we have for now. Keep building your civics knowledge by exploring some of our other topic areas on Civics360!